

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION OF COLUMBIA	}	
GAS OF KENTUCKY, INC. RELATING TO	}	CASE NO. 89-268
THE REPORTING OF AN EXPLOSION	}	

O R D E R

On September 9, 1987, an explosion and fire occurred at 1592 Delaware Avenue, Lexington, Kentucky, that totally destroyed a commercial building belonging to Dan Middleton and equipment belonging to Michael Sanchez, who rented the building.

Columbia Gas of Kentucky, Inc. ("Columbia") notified the Commission's Division of Engineering, Gas Safety Branch, of the incident as required by 807 KAR 5:027, Section 3 (1), at approximately 10:30 a.m. on September 9, 1987. That afternoon a Commission investigator arrived at Columbia's office and reviewed service order records and odorization records for 1592 Delaware Avenue. All records reviewed appeared to be in order. The investigator was told that the Lexington Fire Department suspected arson and that the area was sealed off until it finished its investigation. The investigator then went to the Fire Department's Third Street location to verify this information and was told by Lt. Glenn W. Parks that arson had not been ruled out at that time. A copy of the Fire Department's report entitled Kentucky Basic Incident Report dated September 9, 1987 is attached as Attachment A of this Order.

On September 14, 1987, a telephone follow-up was made to Columbia to see if a determination concerning arson had been made. Staff was told that nothing had changed since the last contact of September 9, 1987. The PSC Emergency Report that summarizes the telephone reporting was then filed. See Attachment B of this Order.

In June of 1989, Commission Staff was notified by Carol Kenney, a paralegal with the law firm of Miller, Griffin and Marks, that a lawsuit, Civil Action No. 88-CI-3103,¹ had been filed on behalf of Michael Sanchez alleging that leaking natural gas from a distribution line located under or very close to the destroyed building had caused the explosion and fire, and further, that Columbia had a private contractor working in the area when the explosion occurred and that Columbia was aware of unsafe conditions. The Plaintiff further states that a Columbia crew came back to the location the same night to purge gas from the ground around the destroyed building.

On July 24, 1989, Commission Staff was informed by Ms. Kenney and Julie Goodman, an attorney with Miller, Griffin and Marks, that the Lexington Fire Department had issued a supplementary report dated September 15, 1987 which ruled out arson as the cause of the incident and found instead that a gas leak caused the explosion. A copy of this report is attached as Attachment C.

¹ Michael J. Sanchez, Individual, d/b/a Sanchez Textile Unlimited v. Columbia Gas of Kentucky, Inc., No. 88-CI-3103 (Fayette Circuit Court filed September 1, 1988).

The Commission's administrative regulation 807 KAR 5:027, Section 4(3)(b), provides that "if additional information is received by the utility subsequent to the initial report indicating a different cause, more serious injury or more serious property damage than was initially reported, a supplemental telephone report shall be made to the Commission staff as soon as practicable." Columbia has not made a supplemental report to the Commission regarding the Lexington Fire Department Report of a gas leak as the cause of the incident.

Based upon the above information, including the September 15, 1987 report by the Lexington Fire Department, the Commission finds it appropriate and necessary to open on its own motion this investigation of the explosion at 1592 Delaware Avenue.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Columbia shall file the following information with the Commission within 10 days of the date of this Order:

1. Information concerning construction work, including uprating, replacements, repair, pressure reduction, etc. on the main located under the destroyed building, including any work performed prior to and after the incident.

2. Maps showing locations of gas mains and service lines near 1592 Delaware Avenue prior to the incident.

3. Description of the work being performed and the name and address of the construction company employed by Columbia that was working in the vicinity of the explosion site prior to and at the time of this incident, including names and addresses of all

persons working on this project. Also include names of Columbia inspectors assigned to this project.

4. All service (work) orders for 1592 Delaware Avenue for the previous 2 years.

5. All leak repair information for 1592 Delaware Avenue and vicinity for the previous 5 years.

6. A copy of the in-house report resulting from Columbia's investigation of the fire/explosion, including test of and abandonment of main located under the building.

7. Copies of any photos or video tape taken by Columbia related to the incident.

8. A diagram of the site to scale, showing the location of the gas leak, location of the building over the line, and location of other mains in the immediate area serving that portion of Delaware Avenue.

9. A copy of pressure chart(s) for 1 month prior to the fire/explosion for the line under the building and the line serving 1592 Delaware Avenue.

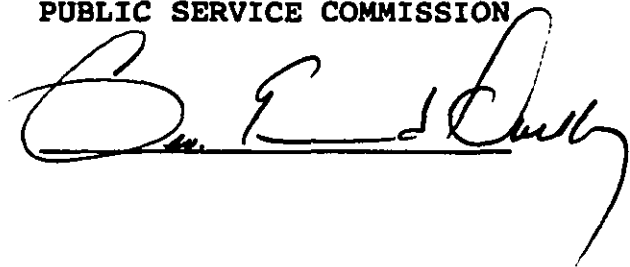
10. Odorant test records for the month prior to the fire/explosion for the line where the leak was discovered and the line serving 1592 Delaware Avenue.

Done at Frankfort, Kentucky, this 4th day of October, 1989.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

ATTEST:

Executive Director

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, likely belonging to a member of the Public Service Commission, is written over the printed name of the commission.



KENTUCKY BASIC INCIDENT REPORT

Errors contained in this report are intended for the use of the State Fire Marshal. Estimates and evaluations made herein represent "most likely" and "most probable" cause and effect. Any representation as to the accuracy or accuracy of reported conditions outside the State Fire Marshal's office is neither intended or implied.

FILED

SEP 16 1987

PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSIONERS - 1FILL IN THIS REPORT
IN YOUR OWN WORDS

L.F.U.C.G.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1. DELETE
2. CHANGE

FOID	INCIDENT NO	EXP NO	MO.	DAY	YEAR	DAY OF WEEK	ALARM TIME	ARRIVAL TIME	TIME IN SERVICE
002159090481	00090987					05:21	05:25		
TYPE OF SITUATION FOUND						TYPE OF ACTION TAKEN			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Structure fire <input type="checkbox"/> 12 Outside of structure fire <input type="checkbox"/> 13 Vehicle fire <input type="checkbox"/> 14 Tents, burlap, grass fire <input type="checkbox"/> 15 Refuse fire						<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Stagnation <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Rescue only <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Investigation only <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Remove hazard <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Standby			
FIXED PROPERTY USE						MUTUAL AID			
Textile Finishing Plant 735						<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Recd <input type="checkbox"/> 2 G.M.A. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Other			
CORRECT ADDRESS						ZIP CODE			
1590 Delaware Avenue						40505001600			
OCCUPANT NAME LAST, FIRST, MI						TELEPHONE			
Sanchez Textile Unlimited						252-3704			
OWNER NAME LAST, FIRST, MI						ROOM OR APT			
CWA Local 3372						1590 Delaware Ave. 255-9986			
METHOD OF ALARM FROM PUBLIC						DISTRICT			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Telephone direct <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Coded signal municipal <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Private fire alarm						<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Radio <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Direct report (verbal) <input type="checkbox"/> 6 No alarm received <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Telephone to line to F.D.			
NUMBER FIRE SERVICE PERSONNEL RESPONDED						NUMBER ENGINES RESPONDED			
025 E-2, E-5 003						A-7 001, E-2, E-3, E-4, E-5, E-6, E-7, E-8, E-9, E-10, E-11, E-12, E-13, E-14, E-15, E-16, E-17, E-18, E-19, E-20, E-21, E-22, E-23, E-24, E-25, E-26, E-27, E-28, E-29, E-30, E-31, E-32, E-33, E-34, E-35, E-36, E-37, E-38, E-39, E-40, E-41, E-42, E-43, E-44, E-45, E-46, E-47, E-48, E-49, E-50, E-51, E-52, E-53, E-54, E-55, E-56, E-57, E-58, E-59, E-60, E-61, E-62, E-63, E-64, E-65, E-66, E-67, E-68, E-69, E-70, E-71, E-72, E-73, E-74, E-75, E-76, E-77, E-78, E-79, E-80, E-81, E-82, E-83, E-84, E-85, E-86, E-87, E-88, E-89, E-90, E-91, E-92, E-93, E-94, E-95, E-96, E-97, E-98, E-99, E-100			
NUMBER AERIAL APPARATUS RESPONDED						NUMBER OTHER VEHICLES RESPONDED			
025 E-2, E-5 003						A-7 001, E-2, E-3, E-4, E-5, E-6, E-7, E-8, E-9, E-10, E-11, E-12, E-13, E-14, E-15, E-16, E-17, E-18, E-19, E-20, E-21, E-22, E-23, E-24, E-25, E-26, E-27, E-28, E-29, E-30, E-31, E-32, E-33, E-34, E-35, E-36, E-37, E-38, E-39, E-40, E-41, E-42, E-43, E-44, E-45, E-46, E-47, E-48, E-49, E-50, E-51, E-52, E-53, E-54, E-55, E-56, E-57, E-58, E-59, E-60, E-61, E-62, E-63, E-64, E-65, E-66, E-67, E-68, E-69, E-70, E-71, E-72, E-73, E-74, E-75, E-76, E-77, E-78, E-79, E-80, E-81, E-82, E-83, E-84, E-85, E-86, E-87, E-88, E-89, E-90, E-91, E-92, E-93, E-94, E-95, E-96, E-97, E-98, E-99, E-100			

NUMBER OF INJURIES	NUMBER OF FATALITIES
FIRE SERVICE	FIRE SERVICE

COMPLEX	MOBILE PROPERTY TYPE
NO complex 90	N/A 00
AREA OF FIRE ORIGIN	EQUIPMENT INVOLVED IN IGNITION
Maintenance Shop 105	undetermined 00
FORM OF HEAT/IGNITION	TYPE OF MATERIAL IGNITED
undetermined 00	undetermined 00
METHOD OF EXTINGUISHMENT	LEVEL OF FIRE ORIGIN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Self extinguished <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Make shift extinguisher <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Portable extinguisher <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Automatic <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Preconnected hose/water carried in apparatus tanks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Preconnected hose/water from hydrant, draft, standpipe	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Grade level to 9 ft. above <input type="checkbox"/> 2 10 to 19 ft. above <input type="checkbox"/> 3 20 to 29 ft. above <input type="checkbox"/> 4 30 to 49 ft. above <input type="checkbox"/> 5 50 to 70 ft. above <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Over 70 ft.
	ESTIMATED LOSS (DOLLARS ONLY)
	Heavy

NUMBER OF STORES	CONSTRUCTION TYPE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 story <input type="checkbox"/> 2 stories <input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 4 stories	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Fire resistant <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Heavy timber <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Protected noncombustible
EXTENT OF FLAME DAMAGE	EXTENT OF SMOKE DAMAGE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Object of origin <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Part of room/area of origin <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Room of origin <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Fire-rated compartment	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Floor of origin <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Object of origin <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Part of room/area of origin <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Room of origin <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Fire-rated compartment
DETECTOR PERFORMANCE	SPRINKLER PERFORMANCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 In room or space/compartment <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Not in room or space/compartment <input type="checkbox"/> 3 In room or space/compartment	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Equipment operated <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Equipment should be operated but not <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Equipment present/not present
IF SMOKE SPREAD BEYOND ROOM OF ORIGIN	TYPE OF MATERIAL GENERATING MOST SMOKE
undetermined 00	undetermined 00
	FORM OF MATERIAL GENERATING MOST SMOKE
	undetermined 00

IF MOBILE PROPERTY	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	SERIAL NO.	LICENSE NO.
IF EQUIPMENT INVOLVED IN IGNITION	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	SERIAL NO.	LICENSE NO.

CHECK IF COMMENTS ON REVERSE SIDE

OFFICER IN CHARGE	NAME, POSITION	DATE
B. Holleran	101	9-9-87
REPORT MADE BY	NAME, POSITION	DATE
W. W. Spivey (5629) Lt. Eng. 1		9-9-87

REMARKS

On Arrival Eng. 1 reported large volume of flame coming from building behind 1590 Delaware. Eng. 1 crew caught hydrant, cut lock on gate and covered right side of building with hand line.

Eng. 5 caught hydrant at Henry
Clay & Delaware and ~~immediately~~ dropped
4 1/2" line to front of Building. Lt. Spickard
and Capt. Short pulled 2 1 3/4" lines and attacked
exposure fire first. Eng. 2 & A-7 crews pulled
another 1 3/4" line from Eng. 5 and supported the
attack. After Exposures fires knocked down. Attack
lines were directed on main body of fire.
Extinguishment was accomplished. Overhaul was
started. K. U., Columbia Gas and Arson Bureau
were called for by Major Holleran. Eng. 1 crew
released by Eng. 1 crew. PIT 3.
Occupant states \$31,000.00 contents

P.S.C. EMERGENCY REPORT FORM

DATE SEPT. 9 1987 TIME 10:27 AMCOMPANY Columbia Gas of Ky. Inc.PERSON MAKING CALL: NAME LEROY ELDERTITLE DIST SER. MGR.ADDRESS LEXINGTON Ky.PHONE 255-3612LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE 1592 DELAWARE AVE. LEX. Ky.TIME OF OCCURRENCE 5:30 A.M. (APP.)DESCRIPTION OF OCCURRENCE: DEATHS: YES _____ NO ✓INJURIES: YES _____ NO ✓ESTIMATED COST OF DAMAGE ?

CAUSE & DESCRIPTION SIGN LANGUAGE INC. A SMALL SCREEN PRINT COMPANY HAD
AN EXPLOSION. C.G. Ky. WAS CALLED AT 6:39 AM BY F.D. TO TURN GAS OFF (NOTHING TO INDICATE
NATURAL GAS AT THIS TIME). SUSPECTED TO BE GAS RELATED AT 9:55 AM WHEN LINE BEHIND
BUILDING WAS FOUND TO BE LEAKING. BLDG. IS SERVED FROM FRONT OF BLDG. HOUSE LINE IS ALONG
 EFFECTS ON NORMAL SERVICE

NO OTHER CUSTOMERS AFFECTEDCORRECTIVE ACTIONS TAKEN UNDETERMINED AT THIS TIME9-14-87 LEROY ELDER STATEDTIME OF RESUMPTION OF NORMAL SERVICE N/ASIGNED Leroy ElderTITLE Supervisor Pipeline Safety InvestigatorsDATE 9-9-87

LEXINGTON FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DIVISION OF FIRE - ARSON BUREAU
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

CASE NO. AB- 294 37F

DATE OF REPORT 9/15/87

ADDRESS: 1590 Delaware Avenue

DATE OF INCIDENT 9/9/87

~~It is my opinion that the fire that destroyed the Sanchez Textile Company,~~
1590 Delaware Avenue, was caused by an explosion. The building did not
contain materials that would produce such intense heat that would
destroy everything in the southwest area. Particles of clear window
glass were found several feet in the yard away from the front
windows. A screen print frame was found in the top of a tree, partially
burned. A door lock-keeper pin was bent inward, indicating a force
had pushed the door open from the inside. Concrete block walls
were bowed outward in several areas. Walls in the southwest area
were totally collapsed.

We do know there was an underground gas leak in the area that the
Gas Company was working on. Columbia Gas was on the property
September 10, 1987, drilling holes and purging gas from the ground
around the destroyed building.

Major William H. Lilly

LEXINGTON FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DIVISION OF FIRE - ARSON BUREAU
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

CASE NO. AB- 294 87F

DATE OF REPORT 9/15/87

ADDRESS: 1590 DELAWARE AVENUE

DATE OF INCIDENT 9/9/87

MAJOR LILLY AND I AGREE THAT THE FIRE WAS THE RESULT OF AND EXPLOSION.

MAJOR LILLY'S REPORT EXPLAINS THE EVIDENCE FOUND AT THE FIRE SCENE

INDICATING THAT AN EXPLOSION HAD OCCURRED. WITNESSES STATEMENTS FURTHER

INDICATES THAT AN EXPLOSION DID OCCUR. WITNESSES HEARD A LOUD BOOM AND

THE INTERIOR OF THEIR HOMES AND BUILDINGS SHOOK. THEY INVESTIGATED

OUTSIDE AND OBSERVED FLAMES 75' - 100' IN THE AIR. IT IS MY OPINION

THAT THE FIRE ORIGINATED IN THE CEILING AND ROOF AREA. THERE WAS NOT

ENOUGH FIRE LOAD IN THE BUILDING TO BURN UPWARD AND CAUSE TOTAL DESTRUCTION

OF THE ROOF. THE INTERIOR OF THE BUILDING CONSISTED MOSTLY OF METAL MACHINE

USED IN THE BUSINESS OPERATION. THERE WAS A SMALL AMOUNT OF WOOD AND PAPER

PRODUCT IN THE BUILDING. THERE WAS A MODERATE AMOUNT OF PAINT STORED IN

METAL CABINETS. IT IS MY OPION THAT THE PAINT CONTRIBUTED VERY LITTLE TO

THE FIRE. IT IS MY OPINION THAT NATURAL GAS WAS PROBABLY THE CAUSE OF

THE EXPLOSION. I BASE MY OPINION ON EVIDENCE FOUND AT THE FIRE SCENE AND

WITNESSES STATEMENTS.


LT GLENN W. PARKS